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falls and tremendous rapids for some miles on either side the junction of the Royān.

In most parts the Settite flows through deep beds of conglomerate of large pebbles, firmly cemented together by a calcareous deposit and sand. This is in many places upheaved and broken into large masses by protruding granite.

In that portion of the Settite, long. $36^{\circ} 10' \text{ E.}$, are cliffs about 100 feet high, of a peculiarly pure limestone, some snow-white, and others a bright rose-colour. This limestone again appears in the small range of mountains in Mek Nimmr's country, near the H. Shaballah. I have seen it in no other place.

I found lead ore by the Settite in white quartz, twelve miles west of the Royān.

XI.—*An Account of an Exploration of the Elephant Mountain, in Western Equatorial Africa.* By R. F. BURTON, Esq.,
F.R.G.S., Gold Medallist R.G.S., H.B.M. Consul Fernando Po, &c.

Read, April 27, 1863.

CAPTAIN LUCE, senior officer Bight division, having placed at my disposal H.M.S. *Bloodhound*, Lieutenant Commander Stokes, I resolved to visit Batonga. The weather when we set out was rough and stormy, nor did it improve during the 13 days between the 11th and the 23rd September. The Batonga country follows the rule of the Gaboon, having two dry and two rainy seasons; and the latter rains were commencing here, whilst ending in the northern parts of the coast. With a southerly wind and a rough sea, we steered a S.E. and by S. course, and at 6 P.M. anchored in Great Batonga Bay, a mere roadstead. The *Bloodhound* lay $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile off the land, in 5 fathoms water, lat. $2^{\circ} 52' \text{ N.}$, and long. $90^{\circ} 52' \text{ E.}$ At times a heavy surf breaks upon the whole of the lee-shore, from Camaroons River to Corisco Island; the landing is execrable, and many lives and canoes are lost. Lieutenant Dolben's gig was swamped, and we never went on or put off from shore without risk. There is, however, no difficulty in making Batonga Bay. At some distance, say 10 miles, it appears as a large headland, bounded north and south by the sea, and the small cascade of the Eloke, or Great Batonga River, offers a conspicuous land-mark. When nearer, four tall cotton-trees (*Bombax*), looking like gigantic palms, decorate the site of the sheds, representing the only European factories—those of Messrs. Laughland, and Messrs. Burford and Townsend. The aspect of the coast is by no means unpleasant. The country known to us by the names of Batonga or Banōkō—properly the names of important tribes—begins at the south shore of the innermost recess of the Bight of Biafra, and extends southward to Cape St. John: in this direction, the limit of the Consulate of Biafra. It is a long band of densely-wooded lowland, broken upon a yellow line of sand, broken in places, which appear

to be the mouths of small rivers. Here and there fields of a lighter green give evidence of plantations; and the clusters of brown huts prove it to be not deficient in population. The sea-shores are dark masses of schistose gneiss, against which the waves break and spend themselves. Inland the horizon is bounded by a line of low blue hills, in crescent shape, its gibbous front towards the east, similar to those found at the head of the Gaboon River, and probably part of the same line. After visiting them in sundry places, I conjectured them to be the outlying range of the mysterious Sierra del Crystal, which may represent the Western Ghauts of the African Peninsula. No traveller has yet crossed it. From inquiries among the natives, however, I believe it to be placed, as in East Africa, from 100 to 150 miles inland, and to be a primitive, barren range; whereas all its outliers, between the main chain and the sea, are densely wooded to their summits. The most remarkable of these subranges is the "Elephant Mountain," which is clearly distinguishable from the roadstead, bearing south-east, and distant apparently 10 miles. Curious to say, there is a similar formation on the East African Coast, with no great difference of latitude. The latter, however, enjoys the celebrity of Arrian's *Periplus*; the *Periplus* of Hanno nowhere alluded to the Western *ἐλεφαντος ὄρος*. At a distance the resemblance to an elephant *couchant* is striking. When the clouds clear away, a long chine extends high above the lowlands; sundry depressions form the ear and neck; a swelling on the right of the profile, dipping towards the southern base, is the trunk; and the body everywhere bristles with trees. At this season it is rarely well seen. I need hardly say that it has never been ascended by Europeans, some of whom have resided for years without exploring a mile of the interior.

On 12th September, 1862, the morning after our arrival, the *Bloodhound* was surrounded by a flotilla of the little canoes for which Batonga is celebrated. Their invention is probably due to the surf, which is fatal to ordinary ship's-boats. The material is cotton-wood, or some other light timber, painfully hollowed out with a native adze; sometimes carved and decorated with red paint, yet selling for 1 dollar each; the weight rarely exceeds 15 lbs., the length is about that of a man. The thinnest of cross-bars connect the sides, and the proprietor sits upon a bridge of wood about an inch thick, curved shaped, and a little raised above the gunwale. Nothing can exceed the skill with which these people launch through a heavy surf. The dwarf vehicle is placed upon the water's edge, the paddler mounts it as he would a horse, pushing forward with his feet till he sees a break in the waves; he then shoves off vigorously, and uses, as soon as possible, a paddle, corresponding in size with the canoe. When the paddle is once

out, a capsize rarely takes place; the legs are allowed to hang over the sides. The vehicle is buoyant as a water-bird, and *if* it turns over, it is easily righted by men who are almost amphibious. Backing out is managed by a succession of dexterous kicks, and the legs are drawn in when speed is desired. Sometimes a limb is lost by sharks, but these are rare in the Batonga waters. From afar, the fisherman appears to be sitting buoyant upon the waves; and when there are rollers, nothing but his head protrudes above the surface. When beckoned on board, he will climb up the side with his canoe and paddle under his arm, for fear of a theft. Our visitors brought a small supply of long and broad-bladed knives, barbed and jagged spears of native iron, large wooden and brass-wired pipes, and pipe-bowls, shaped like those of the Sinaitic Arabs.

After visiting the supercargoes, and hearing their grievances, I invited the two chiefs of the maritime country to a palaver on board the *Bloodhound*, and proceeded with Lieutenant Stokes in his gig, manned by four Kroomen, to inspect the falls of the "Eloke River." For about 3 miles we rowed through a tumbling water that foamed upon the outlying rocks, along a yellow strip of sand, backed by patches of black and leek-green verdure. After an hour we turned the point, and suddenly found ourselves in a mass of breakers, that rose as if by magic from the comparatively smooth surface.

On our return, about 5 P.M., the bar was breaking right across under the freshening breeze, and though the gig escaped being swamped, my aneroid and sketch-book did not. Landing on the smooth sand, we walked a few paces, and called at Messrs. Hutton and Cookson's factory, tenanted by a Mr. Hardy, acting under a native "trade man" from the Gaboon. The factories are wretched native houses, fitted with a few articles of European furniture. Although the country is rich, there is no trade but ivory, which comes from considerable distances; elephants being rarely found within four days' march of the coast.

We then proceeded to the Falls of the Eloke River, which, though dignified by the name of Cataracts, are mere fish-leaps.

The weather was unpropitious; but Lieutenant Stokes and I could not resist a desire to explore the "Elephant Mountain," and to obtain, if possible, a view of the unknown interior. Travellers of the Parkian Age always preferred the "dries" for travel, holding the rainy to be the deadly season. We moderns have inverted our belief. It is well, however, to remark that the rains bring with them one deadly scourge—swollen and ulcerated feet. Our three days' journey lay through a wholly untried land; a country which had never seen a white man, which had never been traversed by a

stranger; the details therefore, though of little intrinsic value, may be considered interesting, as a proof how easily an explorer might penetrate into this part of Africa.

Having prepared our few necessities, we landed with the inevitable wetting, on the 14th September, 1862, and repaired to Messrs. Laughland's factory, where we were hospitably received by his agent, Mr. McCallum. A rough and noisy crowd gathered round the door to stare, laugh, and, if possible, worry us. By way of diversion, we proceeded to call upon a neighbouring chief, whose village lay but a few hundred yards distant. Our route lay along the sands, here intersected by a streamlet of sweet water, like those of the Gaboon Coast. On the way we saw some fine bullocks, which the people will not sell. The villages show a few animals—goats, fowl, and Manilla ducks. Hereabouts we came upon a group palavering under a fiery sun, and were harangued by a Conservative in a sky-blue coat. We then ascended a clay-bank, and, passing through scattered plantations, we entered the village of Great Sandy. He is at present the village war-chief, second and successor to King John; but he makes no secret of his resolve to become monarch of all he surveys, and, to make favour with the multitude, he has attempted to maltreat Europeans. I found in him a type that is met with, though very rarely, in the Negro race, and which was new to me upon arrival on the West African Coast. The first case seen was in Brass Town. "Sandy," is a xanthous man, with yellow skin, red, not yellow, hair, light-brown, not pink eyes. He is clearly not a Mulatto, nor does he at all resemble the Albino; of the latter, there is said to be a village not far in the interior. A small child sitting by his side was of the same complexion, and a woman who passed by the door showed similar characteristics. This "sandy" temperament has not, to my knowledge, been noticed by African travellers. The people, as a race, were by no means remarkable in appearance: they had their teeth filed, and they suffered apparently severely from cutaneous diseases. In the interior we afterwards saw a solitary case of goître, the victim being an old man. The war-chief brought for us boxes, and placed them under the shady eaves; preferring himself to perch upon a horizontal pole, supported by forked uprights. He showed scant civility, but sent for "Young John," son of "Old John," who soon declared that "woman palaver for bush" prevented his acting guide. While affairs progressed thus unsatisfactorily, I inspected the village. It is built after the fashion that obtains from the Camaroons River to the Gaboon country, and how far south is to me unknown. A single long street forms the whole, and the beginning and the end are occupied by transverse palaver-houses, with bamboo settees and sitting-poles, and differing from

the others only in that they have no doors. The huts in which poor men lie are mere sheds of matting. The wealthier build basket-like walls of bamboo wattle (*P. vinifera*), on floors often sunk below the surface, and roof them in with mats. We took scant leave of the churl Sandy. Our visit, however, had done some good. A "trade boy," which means a trader in embryo, perceiving that we were determined to try our fortunes, followed us, and offered himself as guide; warning us, however, that he could bring us no recruits. The services of Mtonga, alias Joseph, were accepted; 3 dollars being his remuneration, in case of success. At 7 A.M., on Monday, the 15th September, we set out, between two downpours of rain, a fearful nimbus purpling the eastern sky. Our party consisted of Lewis, the head Krooman, with two of his "Lord Howe's boys," bearing muskets, and two Kroomen hired at the factories, to carry our little outfit of cloth, tobacco, and well-diluted liquor. The youth Swanzy, who acted as little footpage, and Mtonga, whose arm was solemnly held up by old King William, in sign that he had made him over to us, body and all, concluded the party.

As we were passing through the plantation villages, outside the maritime settlements, our attendants were somewhat discomposed by the ominous wail for the dead, with which some of the village women tested their poor nerves. Entering the bush I was reminded of the scenery with which Corisco Island pleases all visitors; a rolling land, where a wonderful variety of trees, amongst which the wild mango is conspicuous, spring from the densest and darkest bush, deep shady hollows, waving ridges of ground, and then corresponding depressions, the latter always provided with a cold streamlet, muddy and fetid near the shore, pure and sandy inland. Water was everywhere but too abundant: at this season of the year it flooded the path. The Europeans, however, drink the produce of the nearest pool, and complain of frequent deaths by dysentery, when by sending a few miles they might enjoy the purest element. After half an hour's march we reached the villages of Jambive, inhabited by bushmen, who are mostly subject to the maritime people. Another thirty minutes, and a broad water led us to Mowesan: these names, it will be observed, are rather of districts, than of distinct settlements. "Tuka," a flowing stream, waist-deep, lay in our way, after which appeared stone-scatters of pebbles, and rude black conglomerate, in places forming natural steps. The path ran like a narrow link through the densest possible bush; here and there it was bordered by the usual elephant-pits, the East Indian Ogi—the traps of bent tree, common to this part of Africa, and bushmen's graves of small dimensions, covering pits, and basins, and evidences of Fetish, in two short

parallel railings of small sticks. During the whole march we saw not a single head of game ; and, as might be expected, where guns are common, animal life, save vermin, was exceedingly rare : the bark-like hoo-hoo-hoo of the touraco, a crested jay of rare beauty and stupidity, being the only sound that broke the silence of the luxuriant waste. Frequent tracts of the tallest grass, here the evidence of fallow land, and clearings in the bush, showed, however, that all was not desert. At 8:50 A.M. we again crossed the Tuka rivulet, athwart whose glassy stream mica was visible. Shortly afterwards we saw, deep below us to the left, the swift brown current of "Madiba ma Eloke," by the white man called the "Batonga River." At 9 A.M. we entered the settlements of Sabale. As usual, they were three in number ; the first two, small and scattered, acting like approaches to the last, which is usually the "King's" head-quarters. The good Mtonga attempted to hurry us through without paying black mail ; but we soon saw the head of the Indian file stopped short, by an angry host of spearmen and musketeers, shouting, gesticulating, and flourishing their weapons. An uninitiated person would have expected the instant massacre of the whole party : Lieutenant Stokes and I contented ourselves with retiring into the palaver-house, where, if necessary, we could use our weapons to advantage, and left black man to settle things after "black man's fashion." On these occasions to force a way would as inevitably lead to bloodshed, as to break the *consigne* of a French sentinel. The whole affair was settled with five heads of tobacco : of these each contains three leaves, now worth singly a halfpenny in invoice price, and about double in retail. The detention lost us an hour. At 10:45 A.M. we resumed our march. After wading through another long water, called the Wásá, we ascended a slope, and presently saw straight before us Nángá, the Elephant Mountain. It had lost, however, the peculiarity of appearance which gave it a name when viewed from the seaboard, and now appeared in the shape of a regular saddleback ; the pommel being its southern extremity, and seemingly perpendicular. At 11:45 A.M. we entered the settlements of Mámbe Nángá, whose polite king ushered us into a private lodging, after a *séance* of the briefest upon the bamboo settees of the palaver-house. Here we halted for breakfast, fairly telling the people that as we intended to ascend Nángá on the morrow, we could not night in their village. The river was to be crossed ; and the experienced traveller never leaves, if possible, an obstacle for the beginning of a day's march. They, on the other hand, did their best to overrule our plans. The African has three reasons for detaining the guest. *Firstly*, he wants rum, tobacco, and cloth ; *secondly*, he holds the white man's visit to be an honour ; and *thirdly*, he is jealous of, because he hates, his neighbour.

The tactics of our hosts were amusing. The king brought his best fare—a fowl and plantains; promising us, if we would stay, as much more as we pleased. In Africa there are three degrees of dish to visitors, showing the comparative wealth of a tribe. The first is a bullock, the second a goat, the third a hen or a bunch of plantains. The people, gathering to stare at us, placed directly before the open door all the virginal and matronly beauties of the village. Still we were inexorable. The women of the bushfolk are, like those of some Niger tribes, as tall and stout as the men; sometimes larger, and, to speak plainly, ugly. The hair is fantastically and variously dressed. It is never, however, long, or worn *à la Diane*, as amongst the Fan. The swift brown river, which passes by the southern extremity of the Elephant Mountain, is here deep, and twenty yards broad, running under upright banks of stiff yellow earth, which are capped with a profusion of beautiful vegetation, making the reach a model of African potamology. How to cross was the question; the people had assembled in crowds, and, as all know, there is always trouble and delay at these vexed places. In parts of Gorulia, money is left upon the ground, rather than pay the road tolls and ferry dues. At first we saw only cockleshell canoes, and one was capsized before our eyes. A vessel on a larger scale stood on the bank; but the Ancagonian Daw to whom it belonged summoned her sisterhood, and bore it off, whilst a son of the house bore away the paddles. At last Mtonga and tobacco prevailed against all obstacles, and we were permitted to embark in a craft through whose bottom rose little jets, like those that spout from a pierced hose. Ferried across without accident, we climbed up the right bank, aided by a pull-line. Following for a time the river's course, we then struck out inland—northwards. The country was the normal bush, with here and there a large and recent clearing. It is rich in cardamoms, whose lovely flowers startle one, as they appear to spring from the foul soil, whilst the fruit is shed in all directions. This plant we afterwards found growing a few feet from the sea; yet Europeans ignore the fact, and the Batonga men who use it as medicine, bring it, or pretend to bring it from the interior, and sell it dear on the coast. There are also kola nuts (*Sterculia acuminata*), growing wild, but unused and unknown. The India-rubber vine hangs everywhere neglected; the palm-oil tree is allowed to shed its fruit on the ground; and the cocoas, which might be greatly multiplied, are used only for food. There are bees in every forest, but no one ever dreams of hiving them. After an hour and a half's walk, we marched through a line of scattered settlements, out of which the bush people turned with a prodigious clatter and clamour; and we established ourselves in the furthest, which was

also nearest to our destination. That day's work had been three hours and three quarters, during which we might have made 7 statute miles; the bearing of the roadstead was north-west, and the B.P. (Fahr.) showed $211^{\circ} 50'$, temp. 83° (Fahr.). A house was soon cleared for storing our property. We then proceeded to the pleasant task of the African traveller's day, the finish-off. We did not, however, succeed in preventing a red bandana from being stolen from Lieutenant Stokes. Our entertainers had us all to themselves. The boys, after often but vainly attempting to rob us, wrestled; the women enjoyed our smelling-salts; and at dusk all the village, having obtained a bottle of rum, repaired to the palaver-house for a dance. The performance, which included both sexes, hardly bears description. The band consisted of a nyeng—two hollow iron cones, joined at the base, and beaten upon like a tom-tom—a common African instrument; wooden clappers, not unlike castanets; and the drum of the country, a large cylinder with a narrow longitudinal slit above. Loud above the clatter, rose the song, and fast and furious under the effects of liquor waxed the *bal immoral*. Blessings of Bilam, or rum, are very unequally distributed in these regions. The people of the seaboard are surfeited and thoroughly demoralised by it. Once industrious and comparatively honest, they began the evil practice about twenty years ago, and are now become thieves and idlers. It even tells upon the population, which in these regions is very prolific. The villages still literally swarm with children, and a barren woman is called a "Goat." The bush people never see rum, except on the rare occasions when they bring ivory to the beach: consequently they look upon it with the greediest eyes, as it is their god. An explorer ought carefully to avoid carrying with him spirituous liquors, which are heavy and soon expended, besides causing all kinds of annoyances, and perhaps dangers. Even tobacco should be sparingly taken. The safest outfit is in cloth and beads. We slept—if I may use the word—upon bedsteads extemporised out of the host's trade-cases; the sand-flies began operations before dark, the flies followed, and the mosquitoes feasted the rest of the night upon us. We arose at 5 A.M. on the morning of the next day, September 16; a thick cloud-mist now concealed the fair proportions of the Elephant Mountain. By Mtonga's desire, we discharged the Enfields into the nearest trees, and reloaded. He vauntingly pointed out to the gazers the folly of opposing such weapons. At 6 A.M. we left Lâbele on our return, not without some trouble, as all viewed the departure of rum and tobacco with sentiments of sorrow and indignation. Mtonga threw a leaf to the housemaster, which gesture appeared to appease him; we could obtain no explanation as to how the spell was so potent.

Passing to the s.e., through the entire plantation of banana, we descended into a deep hollow, and crossed the brook Nyáne, pursuing for some distance its left bank. The water is deliciously cool and clear; its sands are golden with mica, and the bits of rounded quartz that strew the bed show that it drains a country of primitive formation, as the Sierra del Crystal is reported to be.

We had presently rounded the end of the Elephant Mountain, and began an ascent from the south-east, instead, as we expected, from the west: the sequel showed that Mtonga had chosen the better path. The incline was steep, and, as we mounted, the forest thinned out and the air became sensibly cooler.*

Presently the ascent became so steep that we were compelled to bring hands to the aid of feet: in places the angle must have been 45° . The surface was of shallow mould, overlying slippery clay with outcrops of rock, and a sparse growth of small but tough trees, which afforded a firm hold. The ant-hills were of the pagoda shape noticed by travellers in the Gaboon country; small earth-coloured mushrooms, sometimes adorned with three tiers of eaves, and tenanted by a small brown species. In one part, where a wall of rock some 30 feet high rose perpendicularly across our path, we thought this trial a failure. We managed, however, to creep along a ledge that turned our difficulty. The scrambling required frequent rests; though short, it was sharper than anything I had seen when ascending the Peak of Cameroons or Fernando Po. At 9 A.M. we stood breathless upon the summit, where we were followed by some fifty people, principally the tail of a Bush King, who had accompanied us with the view of making our rum and tobacco prisoners for the night. Having distributed homœopathic doses, amidst a tremendous hubbub, we broke our fast and then inspected the place. We had marched that morning 3 hours, but probably not more than 4 miles, which would make the routal distance from the Factories to the summit of Mons Elephas, 11 miles. Our halting-place was upon the summit of the saddleback's pommel, which is composed of upright stone blocks and trees. The barometer showed 209° , temp. 75° , thus confirming the height trigonometrically given in the chart, 1707 feet.

A stream of cold water was not far distant, the air was delightful,

* As in every place, except Lagos, upon the West African coast, as far as I have visited, there is for Batonga the promise of a local sanitarium, when the land shall have become quasi-civilized, and the bush and jungle, here man's greatest enemy, shall have been improved off. So far from doubting the future of Africa, I become every year more certain, but less sanguine, that it *can* be rendered healthy for Europeans. This *will* be done,—but when? As yet the work has hardly commenced.

and already at this altitude the sun and heat, so sweltering in the lowlands, became endurable. After cutting our initials upon a tall tree below the pommel, we proceeded to the descent. The Bush King, who was accompanied by his brother carrying a fowl—manifestly our dinner *in posse*—led us down the western face of the mountain; and we followed, nothing loth, feeling somewhat aggrieved that we had been led round the south-eastern end. It was a short cut; but if the ascent was bad, the descent was worse. Had we attempted this direction, two days would have barely sufficed. There was no path, save sometimes a deep crack in the rock, or a rainworn groove in the clay.

We now had to tread like rope-dancers on fallen trunks; most suspicious place for snakes and other vermin. For slighting a convenient cave in the rocks, we were punished by a heavy shower at 11 A.M.; and it was followed by an outburst of sun, which, if *coup de soleil* were not almost unknown in these regions, might have excited apprehension. About noon we reached a new clearing, whence, descrying with pleasure the now unclouded sea, we disposed ourselves for a halt. The bush workmen, however, clamoured for tobacco; refusing which, we re-started. There was no improvement in the descent, although we were now approaching the lowlands. Long tracks of muddy water, under a dense fog, now took the place of ridges and gulleys.

The day's work had been severe, and told upon our untrained frames. After passing a pleasant evening, we retired into the society of the mosquitoes; and at 2 A.M. Lieutenant Stokes was attacked by fever and ague. I need not describe our return march, which he effected with pain and difficulty. The sun, the violent rain, and the wading through deep water, were severe inflictions to a man whose pulse was at 100.

We reached at 11.15 A.M. the hospitable doors of Mr. McCallum's factory. The *Bloodhound* lay in a healthy position, yet an awful plague had declared itself on board. Our first shock on return was to hear that the commander's steward, whom we had left slightly unwell, had died after three days' illness of yellow fever, and was awaiting burial. Nothing therefore remained but to quit Batonga without delay. The fatal sickness admitted no delay for investigation. I conveyed Lieutenant Stokes on board; and at noon, on the 18th Sept., we stood in detestable weather out to sea.
